

## A9 Safety Group

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at 10:00

Birnam Arts and Conference Centre, Birnam

### Attendees:

John Smith	BEAR Scotland Ltd
Alan Campbell	BEAR Scotland Ltd
Alan Farnington	BEAR Scotland Ltd
Neil MacSporran	Central Scotland Safety Camera Partnership
George Mair	Confederation of Passenger Transport
David Richardson	Federation of Small Businesses
Margaret Simpson	Freight Transport Association
Neil Greig	Institute of Advanced Motorists
Dougie Bennion	Northern Safety Camera Partnership
Supt Iain Murray	Police Scotland
Bryan McGeogh	Police Scotland
Ian Martin	Police Scotland
Pat Glancey	Road Haulage Association
Fraser Grieve	Scottish Council for Development and Industry
Gus Beveridge	Stagecoach
Hugh Logan	The Highland Council
Arron Duncan	Tayside Safety Camera Partnership
Stewart Leggett (Chair)	Transport Scotland
Stuart Wilson	Transport Scotland
David McConnell	Transport Scotland
George Henry	Transport Scotland
Paul Reid	Transport Scotland
Graham Thomson	Transport Scotland

### Notes of Meeting

Stewart Leggett welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

Stewart Leggett asked for comments on the minutes of previous meetings held on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013. David Richardson and Fraser Grieve noted that the comments on average speed cameras in the minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 didn't reflect everyone's views with some concerns still ongoing with the scheme in particular to the perceived length from Dunblane to Inverness with no break.

FSB and SCDI consider that while acknowledging that average speed cameras might provide an effective answer to problems at specific black spots, they are of the opinion that average speed cameras are not the answer to the road as a whole and they oppose their introduction on this basis. SL noted the comments and informed that comments to reflect these reservations had been taken on board. He also mentioned that David McConnell would be running a presentation during the meeting on the cameras which would give more information on the proposed scheme extents.

George Henry presented an update from the previous meetings on the forthcoming A9 website and overtaking campaign. He advised that population of the full website was nearing completion and will be launched on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at House of Bruar. This will provide a 'one-stop shop' for all A9 matters and will include a section

on the overtaking campaign, which is to be launched on the same day. This section will include key messages, infographics and short videos showing details such as safe overtaking manoeuvres.

Following comments from the previous meeting that the art work for the overtaking campaign was too negative this has been now been amended and although not as hard hitting as before it was still displaying a powerful message. George showed the new images containing the tag line 'What is the last thing you want to hear before you die?' it was agreed in general that the new posters were an improvement and less negative than the previous drafts shown.

The campaign will run for five weeks through March and will include radio adverts, social media, petrol pump stickers and sticker decals for vehicles. - *Post meeting note – an illustration of bus backs and petrol pumps is given at the end of this note.*

Alan Campbell noted that BEAR Scotland had agreed to display the decals on their service vehicles but explained there were restrictions on where these could be placed due the requirements governing vehicle conspicuity. As a result many of the decals would be placed on the side of vehicles rather than the back, where the message would be most effective. He urged other partners at the meeting who could place stickers on the backs of their vehicles to do so.

Pat Glancey advised that the campaign messages would be circulated in the RHA newsletters and linked from their website. In addition she will investigate the use of a trailer to assist in the campaign.

Ian Martin asked whether the campaign could be extended or run at different times of year, in particular looking at the run up to school holidays and tourist seasons as different roads users use the A9 at different times of the year. Stewart Leggett advised would be possible although other campaigns are already being considered for the year such as Speed Cameras, Speed limits and the 50mph pilot.

David Richardson asked if something could be incorporated into the campaign regarding the use dipped head lights in in all weather conditions to alert potential over-takers to their presence. It could make all the difference. It was felt that this may be a good suggestion for inclusion in a future campaign. George Henry said he would appreciate further suggestions for consideration of future campaigns from partners.

Stuart Wilson reported that the dates had now been set for forthcoming public information exhibitions. These are:

- 28<sup>th</sup> February in Inverness at the Thistle Hotel
- 3<sup>rd</sup> March in Perth at MacDiarmid Park
- 4<sup>th</sup> March in Pitlochry at the Festival Theatre
- 5<sup>th</sup> March in Aviemore at MacDonald Highland Hotel

Transport Scotland will be taking the lead on the exhibitions; BEAR Scotland has also confirmed attendance on all dates. Any support from the partners would be appreciated if they wish to come along.

The exhibitions will cover the range of proposed measures contained within the Interim Safety Plan and will provide information on the Group. Feedback request forms will be available to the public.

David McConnell gave a presentation of the Average Speed Camera system which covered the strategy, the equipment to be used, the detailed design of Perth to Inverness and the outline design of Dunblane to Perth.

The speed cameras which are a SPECS 3 system are being supplied by Vysionics. The Perth to Inverness section will contain 28 camera locations which will be spaced at approximately five to seven kilometre intervals. These will enforce on single carriageways and support the revised HGV speed limits.

BEAR Scotland will carry out the installation of infrastructure for the camera on this section with the detailed design now largely complete. Construction is anticipated to commence late March and the scheme is due to be commissioned early October. Baseline Data sets are to be taken prior to this to show existing speeds etc.

The section between Dunblane and Perth, the design of which is ongoing, will be focused at reducing risk at several key junctions such as Crieff, Greenloaning and Dunning whilst also looking at encouraging responsible driver behaviour. It is anticipated that the system will also be commissioned in October.

David McConnell also gave an update on the change in HGV Speed Limits for the single carriageway sections on the A9 Perth to Inverness. Regulations have now been drafted and are due to be considered in Parliament before summer recess.

There is a comprehensive signing regime planned for both the Average Speed Cameras and the change in speed limit. David displayed the proposed HGV repeater sign which raised some concerns with regards to its interpretation. David explained that the sign had been given approval by the Transport Scotland Standards Branch, but in light of these comments, the sign layout would be considered further.

Alan Campbell provided an update on recent maintenance and improvement work on the route between Dunblane and Perth, which included a resurfacing scheme at north of Greenloaning and studding work over the entire section. In addition he reported that the replacement of existing street lighting columns with passively safe alternative at Gleneagles was completed in December. Works programmed to commence include installation of safety barrier at Broxden Roundabout and the permanent closure of the two central reserve gaps in the Gleneagles area.

John Smith reported on maintenance schemes, which have been carried out recently on the Perth to Scrabster section of the A9. These included high friction surfacing, barrier works, Vehicle Activated Sign installation, surfacing works and also works currently ongoing in improving forward visibility by clearing vegetation on the A9 at 43 sites.

Stewart Leggett asked if these sites could be included within the cyclic landscaping works for the A9 as photos of the sites showed a vast improvement in terms of visibility. John Smith advised that discussions to arrange this are ongoing.

Works on the Kessock Bridge have commenced and are now in week two of a 20 week programme with works due to be completed in June of this year. The first week has seen delays of around 50 minutes in the morning; this has reduced to around 30 minutes this week although that is thought to be in part due to half term.

Alan Campbell advised that winter maintenance has so far gone reasonably well to date with the weather being generally favourable up to date. The Drumochter area still remains an issue with HGVs being noted as causing the largest disruption when incidents occur.

Ian Martin commented on winter maintenance issues that are faced by operatives on the front line and questioned whether the public are not getting the message to use other routes during an incident, or simply ignoring messages them.

Iain Murray advised that Police Scotland is currently advertising for new recruits for the Trunk Road Patrol Group. In the meantime, they will move resources around as much as necessary to address key areas where enforcement is in greater demand. The festive drink drive campaign was noted as being successful; March to April will see a move towards motorcycle campaigns.

David Richardson informed that the Federation of Small Businesses is completely behind making the A9 safer although serious concerns still exist in regard to the proposed Average Speed Camera System – which the FSB opposes – and the public perception of this. The concern being raised was of the potential for cameras to send out subliminal messages to tourists and people travelling up on business and to how this will impact on the economy. The FSB fear is that it will make journeys less enjoyable and discourage people from returning.

Pat Glancey reported that the Road Haulage associate is looking at continual education of drivers. She added that members are happy with the pilot scheme to raise the speed limits to 50mph.

Neil Greig informed that he was happy to have been invited along to the Group. He believes two long term safety issues with the A9 are in the lack of rest areas and toilet facilities.

Neil Greig also added that Institute for Advanced Motorists area groups act independently. Consequently, there may be some varying views amongst the on certain issues and particularly with regards to the Average Speed Camera System. SL would like the opportunity to address any concerns that exist and welcomed any of the groups to attend the public exhibitions. *Post meeting note – Transport Scotland has agreed to speak to IAM members separately at their April event.*

With regard to the dualling project, Paul Reid advised that progress is being made in going forward. The Orders for the first section, from Kincaig to Dalraddy, have been published. Three objections have been received as a result. Orders are being developed for the Luncarty to Birnam section and ground investigations are underway on the Birnam to Dunkeld section.

Rest areas have been discussed with the stakeholders in looking at the dualling with a number of the proposed laybys to incorporate proper rest areas and toilet facilities. Discussions are ongoing with local authorities and hauliers in identifying the best spots.

The design of the route will be tendered in three packages; the first route has been tendered. The winning tenderer will then be eliminated from tendering for the next phase so that no one designer is responsible for the entire scheme.

Margaret Simpson advised that the Freight Transport Association is supportive of all the measures that are being proposed for the A9; in particular the end goal of dualling the route.

Dougie Bennion, Arron Duncan and Neil McSporran gave a summary of enforcement levels and offending rates in their respective areas.

The Safety Camera Partnership is in full support of the Average Speed Camera System. Their introduction will allow the redeployment of vehicles to other areas along the A9 thereby further strengthening the enforcement strategy on the route.

Dougie Bennion advised the Group that a route strategy has been prepared for the A9 in the Northern Safety Camera Partnership area. This identifies 43 sites with collision clusters between Dalwhinnie and Scrabster. Some additional signage is required for this although no capital budget exists for this. Stewart Leggett said he would look into this and consider with the programme officer.

Stewart Leggett informed the Group that the Public Petitions Committee has written to the organisations represented on the A9 Safety Group asking them for their individual responses to questions raised by the Committee in relation to a current petition objecting to the Average Speed Camera System. The deadline for these responses was 25<sup>th</sup> February.

He informed that Transport Scotland will be providing a response to the Committee to the issues raised by the petition and that this will provide clarity over claims that have been made.

Neil Greig asked about media interest and what can be discussed, it was noted that the presentations given earlier would form part of the public exhibitions next week.

It was also asked how quickly minutes would be available and made available to the public. Stewart Leggett advised that the draft note of the meeting would be circulated with a view to having the minute finalised ahead of the next group meeting.

#### **11. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place in approximately three months (date to be confirmed). It will be held at the Birnam Arts and Conference Centre and will start at 10:30am.

